

**Opening Statement for Hon. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen**  
**Markup on HR 2194, the Iran Refined Petroleum Sanctions Act**  
**October 28, 2009**

Mr. Chairman, I am extremely pleased that this urgently needed sanctions legislation is being marked-up today.

The extent of the Iranian threat is far greater today than when the Iran Libya Sanctions Act, also known as ILSA, was passed in 1996, or even when the Iran Freedom Support Act I authored to strengthen Iran sanctions, was enacted into law in 2006.

Throughout, Iran has poured massive resources into its nuclear weapons program, and has made great strides in its development of ballistic missiles and other advanced conventional weapons.

Its support for militant Islamist extremists has greatly expanded as well, and it has adopted increasingly aggressive policies toward other countries in its region.

By sanctioning foreign companies that invested in Iran's energy infrastructure, ILSA sought to cut off investment in Iran's struggling petroleum sector, the regime's economic lifeline.

As a result, Iran's petroleum sector has been denied critical foreign investment.

Today's legislation, the Iran Refined Petroleum Sanctions Act, seeks to ratchet up pressure on the regime by targeting a new vulnerability—namely, Iran's inability to produce sufficient gasoline and other refined petroleum products.

This bipartisan bill already has 330 cosponsors.

There is no question that it will be adopted overwhelmingly when sent to the Floor, which I hope will be soon.

The Amendment in the nature of a substitute we are considering today contains a number of important changes to the introduced bill.

I'll just highlight a few, such as:

- a requirement that investigations into possible violations of the Iran Sanctions Act be concluded within 180 days;
- an expansion of sanctions beyond the maritime shipment of refined petroleum products to Iran to also include truck and rail shipping;
- a prohibition on new nuclear cooperation agreements with governments that do not take effective action against those under its jurisdiction who provide Iran with materials and technology used in its nuclear weapons program;
- additional reporting requirements regarding:
  - the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps;
  - activities by Iranian diplomats, quasi-official entities, and proxies such as Hezbollah in the Middle East, Western Hemisphere, Africa, and beyond;
  - trade between Iran and G-20 nations;
- additional Sense of Congress language regarding newly discovered nuclear facilities, as well as additional statements of policy such as calling on the Secretary of State to make every effort to assist the American hostages taken when Iranian militants seized our embassy in 1979, and their survivors, in achieving full compensation for their injuries.

I believe these and other additions greatly strengthen the bill's effectiveness.

Major opportunities have been thrown away because successive administrations refused to use many of the powerful tools Congress has given them or did so only half-heartedly.

It is my expectation that we will work in a bipartisan manner to ensure that Congressional mandates and intent are no longer ignored by the Executive.

I further hope that the current Administration, as with its predecessor in the second term, does not allow itself to be manipulated by Iran into an indefinite holding pattern, to delay and extract greater concessions while the clock on their breakout capacity continues to tick.

As Winston Churchill warned:

"There is no greater mistake than to suppose that platitudes, smooth words, and timid policies offer a path to safety."

I used this reference at last week's Burma hearing with respect to the proposed new approach to that brutal regime, but it also fits perfectly when discussing dealings with the Iranian regime.

After years of failed efforts at "engagement" and offers of inducements, it should be clear that, unless we impose the maximum pressure on Iran – and this bill is a major step forward in that direction – the regime will continue its march toward:

- acquiring nuclear weapons,
- dominating the Persian Gulf, and
- expanding its network of radical militants around the world.

We still have time to act, but we must do so quickly.